

the oar dipped in water must appear crooked though it is really straight, and why the eyes must see it in that way. Ocular vision can only tell us that it is so but cannot judge. Wherefore it is manifest that as the life of sense excels the body the life of reason excels both.

xxx, 54. If rational life judges by itself alone, then there is nothing more excellent. But clearly it is mutable, since it can be skilled at one moment and unskilled at another. The more skilled it is the better it judges, and its skill is in proportion to its participation in some art, discipline or wisdom. Now we must ask what is the nature of an art. By an art in this context I would have you understand not something that is observed by experience but something that is found out by reason. There is nothing very remarkable in knowing that sand and lime bind stones more securely together than mud, or that he who would build elegantly, must put a feature that is to be unique in the middle of the building, and, if there are several features, they must be made to correspond, like with like. That is sense-knowledge, but it is not far from reason and truth. We must indeed inquire what is the cause of our being dissatisfied if two windows are placed not one above the other but side by side, and one of them is greater or less than the other, for they ought to have been equal; while, if they are placed one directly above the other, even though they are unlike, the inequality does not offend us in the same way. Why don't we notice very much how much the one is greater or less than the other? If there are three windows, sense itself seems to demand either that they should not be unequal, or that between the largest and the smallest there should be an intermediate one as much larger than the smallest as it is smaller than the largest. In this way we take counsel with nature, as it were, to see what she approves. And here we must observe how that which displeases us only a little when we simply look at it, is rejected when we compare it with what is better. Thus we discover that art in the popular sense is nothing but the memory of things we have experienced and which have given us pleasure, with the addition of some skilled bodily activity. If you lack the skill you can still judge of the works produced even though you cannot produce them. And the power of judging is much better.

55. In all the arts it is symmetry that gives pleasure, preserving unity and making the whole beautiful. Symmetry demands unity and equality, the similarity of like parts, or the graded arrangements of parts which are dissimilar. But who can

find absolute equality or similarity in bodily objects? Who would venture to say, after due consideration, that any body is truly and simply one? All are changed by passing from form to form or from place to place, and consist of parts each occupying its own place and extended in space. True equality and similitude, true and primal unity, are not perceived by the eye of flesh or by any bodily sense, but are known by the mind. How is equality of any kind demanded in bodies, and how are we convinced that any equality that may be seen there is far different from perfect equality, unless the mind sees that which is perfect? If indeed that which is not made [*facta*] can be called perfect [*perfecta*].

56. All things which are beautiful to the senses, whether they are produced by nature or are worked out by the arts, have a spatial or temporal beauty, as for example the body and its movements. But the equality and unity which are known only by the mind, and according to which the mind judges of corporeal beauty by the intermediary of the senses, are not extended in space or unstable in time. It would be wrong to say that a wheel can be judged to be round by this standard, while a little jar cannot, or a jar can but a penny cannot. So in the case of times and motions of corporeal things, it would be ridiculous to say that years can be judged by any standard to be of equal length but months cannot, or that months can and days cannot. Whether a proper movement occupies a larger space of time or is measured by hours or brief minutes, all are judged by one and the same standard of changeless equality. If greater and smaller movements and spatial figures are all judged according to the same standard of equality or similitude or fitness, the standard is greater than all of them in potency. But it is neither greater nor less in a spatial or a temporal sense. If it were greater we should not use the whole of it to judge things that are less. If it were smaller we could not use it to judge things that are larger. As it is, we use the absolute standard of squareness to judge the squareness of a market-place, a stone, a table or a gem. And we use the absolute standard of equality to judge the movements of the feet of a running ant and those of an elephant on the march. Who then can doubt that it is neither greater nor less in a spatial or temporal sense, but in potency surpasses all else? This standard of all the arts is absolutely unchangeable, but the human mind, which is given the power to see the standard, can suffer the mutability of error. Clearly, then, the standard which is called truth is higher than our minds.

xxxi, 57. We must not have any doubt that the unchangeable substance which is above the rational mind, is God. The primal life and primal essence is where the primal wisdom is. This is unchangeable truth which is the law of all the arts and the art of the omnipotent artificer. In perceiving that it cannot judge by itself the form and movement of bodies, the soul ought at the same time to realize that its nature excels the nature of what it judges, but also that it is excelled by the nature according to which it judges and concerning which it cannot judge. I can say why the corresponding members of a single body, one on the one side and the other on the other, ought to be alike, because I delight in absolute equality which I behold not with the bodily eyes but with the mind. And therefore I judge that things seen with the eyes are better the nearer they are in their own kind to the things which I know with my mind. No one can say why these intelligible things should be as they are; and no one in his sober senses should say that they ought to be as they are, as if they could be otherwise.

58. No one, if he rightly understands the matter, will venture to say why intelligible things please us, and why when we are wise we earnestly love them. As we and all rational souls rightly judge of inferior creatures when we judge according to truth, so truth alone judges of us when we cleave to it. Not even the Father judges of truth, for it is not less than he is. What the Father judges he judges by means of the truth. All things which seek unity have this rule or form or example, or whatever it is to be called. For unity alone bears the whole similitude of him from whom it has received existence, if it is not incongruous to say "it has received existence" in view of the significance which attaches to the word Son. In any case it derives its existence not from itself but from the first and highest principle which is called the Father: "from whom the whole family in heaven and on earth is named" (Eph. 3:15). "The Father therefore judgeth no man, but hath given all judgment to the Son" (John 5:22). "The spiritual man judgeth all things and is himself judged of none" (I Cor. 2:15), that is by no man, but only by the law according to which he judges all things. Wherefore it is most truly said "we must all appear before the judgment throne of Christ" (II Cor. 5:10). He judges all things because he is above all when he is with God. He is with God when he knows most purely and loves what he knows with all charity. Accordingly, the law is that according to which he judges all things and concerning which no man can judge. In the case of temporal laws,

men have instituted them and judge by them, and when they have been instituted and confirmed no judge may judge them but must judge according to them. He who draws up temporal laws, if he is a good and wise man, takes eternal life into account, and that no soul may judge. He determines for the time being what is to be commanded and forbidden according to the immutable rules of eternal life. Pure souls may rightly know the eternal law but may not judge it. The difference is that, for knowing, it is enough to see that a thing is *so* and not *so*. For judging, it is necessary in addition to see that a thing can be thus or not thus; as when we say it ought to be thus, or to have been thus, or to be thus in the future, as workmen do with their works.

xxxii, 59. But many stop with what delights men and are unwilling to rise to higher things, so that they may judge why visible things give pleasure. If I ask a workman why, after constructing one arch, he builds another like it over against it, he will reply, I dare say, that in a building like parts must correspond to like. If I go further and ask why he thinks so, he will say that it is fitting, or beautiful, or that it gives pleasure to those who behold it. But he will venture no further. He will bow and direct his eyes downward and not understand the cause for all this. But if I have to do with a man with inward eyes who can see the invisible, I shall not cease to press the query why these things give pleasure, so that he may dare to be the judge of human pleasure. He transcends it and escapes from its control in judging pleasure and not according to pleasure. First I shall ask him whether things are beautiful because they give pleasure, or give pleasure because they are beautiful. Then I shall ask him why they are beautiful, and if he is perplexed, I shall add the question whether it is because its parts correspond and are so joined together as to form one harmonious whole.

60. When he sees that that is so, I shall ask whether they completely achieve the unity they aim at, or fall far short of it, and in a measure misrepresent it. No one who is put on his guard can fail to see that there is no form or material thing which does not have some trace of unity, or that no material thing however beautiful can possibly achieve the unity it aims at, since it must necessarily have its parts separated by intervals of space. If this is so, I shall ask him to tell me where he sees that unity, and what is its source; and if he cannot see it, how does he know what it is that material things imitate but cannot completely achieve. If he says of material things: You would not

exist unless some kind of unity held you together, but on the other hand if you were unity itself you would not be material things? the correct reply would be: Whence have you acquired the knowledge of unity according to which you judge material things. Unless you had seen it you would not be able to judge that they come short of it. You would not be right to say that you see it with your bodily eyes, although things do show traces of it, but they come nowhere near it. With the bodily eyes you see nothing but corporeal things. Therefore it is with the mind that we see true unity. But where? If it were here where our body is, it would not be visible to a man who in eastern parts judges in the same way about corporeal things. It is not, then, circumscribed by space. It is present wherever anyone judges in this way. It is nowhere present spatially, but its potency is nowhere absent.

xxxiii, 61. If corporeal things travesty unity, we must not trust things that deceive, lest we fall into the vanities of them that are vain. Since they deceive by appearing to show to the eye of flesh the unity which is seen by the mind alone, we must rather ask whether they deceive by resembling unity or in failing to achieve unity. If they achieved it they would be completely identical with what they imitate. In that case there would be no difference at all. If that were so there would be no deception. They would be exactly what unity is. In any case, if you consider the matter closely they do not actively deceive. He is a deceiver who wants to appear what he is not. He who, without willing it, is thought to be other than he is, is not a deceiver but simply causes mistakes. This is how a deceiver is distinguished from one who causes mistakes. Every deceiver has the will to deceive, whether he is believed or not. But mistakes can be caused by one who has no intention to deceive. Therefore a corporeal form, which can have no will of its own, does not deceive. Nor does it cause mistakes if it is not thought to be what it is not.

62. Even the eyes do not cause mistakes, for they can report nothing to the mind except what they actually see. If not only the eyes but also all the bodily senses report simply as they are affected, I know not what more we ought to expect of them. If there are no vain people there will be no vanity. Anyone who thinks that the oar is broken in the water and is restored when it is taken out has nothing wrong with his senses, but he is a bad judge of what they convey to him. By nature he could have seen nothing else in the water, nor ought he to have seen anything

else. Air and water differ, so it is proper that sensations should be different according as they relate to things in air and in water. So the eye does its duty correctly, for it was made simply to see. But the mind operates perversely, for it and not the eye was made to contemplate supreme beauty. Such a man as we have been speaking of wants to turn his mind to corporeal things and his eyes to God. He seeks to know carnal things and to see spiritual things. But that is impossible.

xxxiv, 63. That perversity must be corrected. Otherwise things are all out of order, up is down and down is up. Such a man will not be fit for the kingdom of heaven. Do not let us seek the highest in the lowest, nor cleave to the lowest. Let us judge these things lest we be judged along with them. Let us attribute to them no more than, as lowest forms, they deserve, lest seeking the first in the last, we be numbered with the last instead of with the first. That is no disadvantage to these lowest things but is a great disadvantage to us. The divine providential government is not on that account any less fitting because the unjust are put in their just place and the foul are fairly dealt with. If the beauty of visible things causes us to make mistakes because it consists in unity but does not completely achieve unity, let us understand if we can that the mistake arises not from what they are but from what they are not. Every corporeal thing is a true body but a false unity. For it is not supremely one and does not completely imitate unity. And yet it would not be a body either if it did not have some unity. Besides it could have no unity unless it derived it from supreme unity.

64. Obstinate souls! Give me a single man who can see without being influenced by imaginations derived from things seen in the flesh. Give me a single man who can see that there is no principle of unity but that alone from which all unity derives, whether it be complete unity or not. Point me out one who sees, not one who merely cavils, and wants to appear to see what he does not see. Give me a man who can resist the carnal senses and the impressions which they impose on the mind; one who can resist human custom and human praise, who suffers the stings of conscience on his bed and restores his soul, who loves not external vanities nor seeks lies; who can say to himself: If there is only one Rome which some Romulus is said to have founded on the Tiber, that is a false Rome which I conjure up in my thoughts. My imaginary Rome is not the real Rome, nor am I really there; otherwise I should know what was taking place

there. If there is one sun, that is a false one which I conjure up in thought, for the real sun pursues its course in its appointed place and time. The imaginary sun I place where and when I will. If my friend is one, I conjure up a false image. I do not know where the real one is, but the imaginary one is where I like to put him. I myself am one person, and I feel that my body is here, but in imagination I go where I like, and speak to whom I like. These imaginary things are false, and what is false cannot be known. When I contemplate them and believe in them, I do not have knowledge, because what I contemplate with the intelligence must be true, and not by any possibility what are commonly called phantasms. Whence, then, is my mind full of illusions? Where is the truth which the mind beholds? It can be replied to one who thinks in this way that that is the true light which enables you to know that these things are not true. By the true light you see the unity whereby you judge whatever you see to be one. But it is quite a different thing from any mutable thing you can see.

xxxv, 65. If your mind eagerly pants to behold these things, keep quiet. Do not strive except against being accustomed to material things. Conquer that habit and you are victorious over all. We seek unity, the simplest thing of all. Therefore let us seek it in simplicity of heart. "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10). This is not the stillness of idleness but of thought, free from space and time. Swelling fleeting phantasms do not permit us to see abiding unity. Space offers us something to love, but time steals away what we love and leaves in the soul crowds of phantasms which incite desire for this or that. Thus the mind becomes restless and unhappy, vainly trying to hold that by which it is held captive. It is summoned to stillness so that it may not love the things which cannot be loved without toil. So it will master them. It will hold them and not be held by them. "My yoke," says the Lord, "is light" (Matt. 11:30). He who is subject to that yoke has everything else subject to himself. He will not labour, for what is subject does not resist. Men could be masters of this world if they were willing to be the sons of God, for God has given them the power to become his sons. But the unhappy friends of this world so fear to be separated from its embrace that nothing is more toilsome to them than to be at rest.

xxxvi, 66. Whoever clearly sees that falsehood is thinking something is what it is not, knows that truth is that which declares what is. If material things deceive us in so far as they fall

short of the unity which they demonstrably imitate, we naturally approve them; for that is the principle from which all unity derives, and to resemble which all things strive. We equally disapprove all that departs from unity and tends towards its opposite. We can understand that there is something so resembling the sole unity and principle of all unity that it coincides with it and is identical with it. This is truth, the Word that was in the beginning [*in principio*], the divine Word that was with God. If falsehood springs from things which imitate unity, not in so far as they imitate it but in so far as they cannot achieve it, the truth which does achieve it, and is identical with it, is unity and manifests unity as it is in reality. Hence, it is rightly called unity's Word and Light. Other things may be said to be like unity in so far as they have being, and so far they are also true. But this is itself the complete likeness of unity, and is therefore truth. Truth makes all things true which are true, and likeness makes things like which are alike. Truth is the form of all things which are true, and likeness of all things which are alike. Since things are true in so far as they have being, and have being in so far as they resemble the source of all unity, that is, the form of all things that have being, which is the supreme likeness of the principle. It is also perfect truth because it is without any unlikeness.

67. Falsehood arises not because things deceive us, for they can show the beholder nothing but their form, and that they have received according to their position in the scale of beauty. Nor do the senses deceive us, for when they are in contact with natural objects they report to their presiding mind nothing but the impressions formed upon them. It is sin which deceives souls, when they seek something that is true but abandon or neglect truth. They love the works of the artificer more than the artificer or his art, and are punished by falling into the error of expecting to find the artificer and his art in his works, and when they cannot do so they think that the works are both the art and the artificer. God is not offered to the corporeal senses, and transcends even the mind.

xxxvii, 68. This is the origin of all impiety of sinners who have been condemned for their sins. Not only do they wish to scrutinize the creation contrary to the commandment of God, and to enjoy it rather than God's law and truth—that was the sin of the first man who misused his free will—but in their state of condemnation they also make this addition to their sin. They not only love but also serve the creature rather than the Creator,

and worship the parts of the creation from the loftiest to the lowliest. Some worship the soul in place of the most high God, the first intellectual creature which the Father made by means of the truth, that it might ever behold the truth, and beholding the truth might also behold himself whom the truth resembles in every way. Next, men come to the living creature through which God eternal and unchangeable makes things visible and temporal in the realm of becoming. Then they slip further down and worship animals and even material things, among which they first choose the more beautiful, above all the heavenly bodies. Some are satisfied with the sun, the most obvious of the heavenly bodies. Others think the moon worthy of religious veneration because of its brightness. It is nearer to us, we are told, and so is felt to have a form that is closer to us. Others add the rest of the stars and the sky as a whole with its constellations. Others join the air to the ethereal sky and make their souls subordinate to these two superior corporeal elements. But those think themselves most religious who worship the whole created universe, that is, the world with all that is in it, and the life which inspires and animates it, which some believe to be corporeal, others incorporeal. The whole of this together they think to be one great God, of whom all things are parts. They have not known the author and maker of the universe. So they abandon themselves to idols, and, forsaking the works of God, they are immersed in the works of their own hands, all of them visible things.

xxxviii, 69. There is another worse and lower idolatry which worships phantasms. Whatever the erring soul in its swelling pride can imagine, they hold as an object of religious worship until at last some conclude that nothing at all should be worshipped, and that men err who allow themselves to get involved in superstition and miserable servitude. But these opinions are vain. They cannot make themselves free. There remain the vices, and they are drawn towards the notion of worshipping them. They are slaves of desire in three forms—desire of pleasure, desire of excelling, desire of novel entertainment. I say that there is no man who holds that there is nothing he ought to worship, who is not the slave of carnal pleasures, or seeks vain power, or is madly delighted by some showy spectacle. So, without knowing it, they love temporal things and hope for blessedness therefrom. Whether he will or no, a man is necessarily a slave to the things by means of which he seeks to be happy. He follows them whithersoever they lead, and fears anyone who seems to have the power to rob him of them. Now a

spark of fire or a tiny animal can do that. In short, not to mention innumerable adverse possibilities, time itself must snatch away all transient things. Now since the world includes all temporal things, those who think to escape servitude by not worshipping anything are in fact the slaves of all kinds of worldly things. In their present extremity unhappy men are so placed that they allow their vices to lord it over them, and are condemned for their lust, pride or curiosity, or for two of them or all together. Nevertheless, so long as they are in this stadium of human life they may attack these vices and overcome them, if they begin by believing what they cannot yet grasp with the understanding, and thereby cease to love the world. As it is written: "All that is in the world is lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and ambition of this world" (I John 2:16). Three classes of men are thus distinguished; for lust of the flesh means those who love the lower pleasures, lust of the eyes means the curious, and ambition of this world denotes the proud.

71. The threefold temptation of the Man whom the truth assumed has given us an example for our warning. "Bid these stones that they become bread," says the tempter. To which our one and only teacher replies: "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word of God" (Matt. 4:3-4). So he taught that desire for pleasure should be brought under, and that we should not yield even to hunger. But possibly some one who could not be overcome by the pleasures of the flesh could be by the pomp of temporal domination. So all the kingdoms of the world were shown, and the tempter said: "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." To this it was replied: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:9-10). So was pride trodden under foot. Moreover the utmost enticements of curiosity were also overcome. For the only reason for urging him to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple was that he might have a remarkable experience. Not even so was he overcome, but in order that we should understand that to know God there is no need to explore divine power by subjecting it to visible experiments, he replied: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Matt. 4:7). Wherefore he who is inwardly fed upon the Word of God does not seek pleasure in the desert. He who is subject to the one God does not seek glory on the mountain, that is, in earthly elation. He who begins to cleave to the eternal spectacle of unchangeable truth is not thrown down by the pinnacle of the body, that is, the eyes, to seek to know inferior and temporal things.



xxix, 72. What obstacle then remains to hinder the soul from recalling the primal beauty which it abandoned, when it can make an end of its vices? The Wisdom of God extends from end to end with might. By wisdom the great Artificer knit his works together with one glorious end in view. His goodness has no grudging envy against any beauty from the highest to the lowest, for none can have being except from him alone. So that no one is utterly cast away from the truth who has in him the slightest vestige of truth. What is it about bodily pleasure that holds us fast? You will find that it is agreeableness. Disagreeable things beget grief and agreeable things beget pleasure. Seek therefore the highest agreeableness. Do not go abroad. Return within yourself. In the inward man dwells truth. If you find that you are by nature mutable, transcend yourself. But remember in doing so that you must also transcend yourself even as a reasoning soul. Make for the place where the light of reason is kindled. What does every good reasoner attain but truth? And yet truth is not reached by reasoning, but is itself the goal of all who reason. There is an agreeableness than which there can be no greater. Agree, then, with it. Confess that you are not as it is. It has to do no seeking, but you reach it by seeking, not in space, but by a disposition of mind, so that the inward man may agree with the indwelling truth in a pleasure that is not low and carnal but supremely spiritual.

73. If you do not grasp what I say and doubt whether it is true, at least make up your mind whether you have any doubt about your doubts. If it is certain that you do indeed have doubts, inquire whence comes that certainty. It will never occur to you to imagine that it comes from the light of the sun, but rather from that "true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." It cannot be seen with these eyes, nor with the eyes which seem to see the phantasms of the brain, but with those that can say to phantasms: You are not the thing I am seeking. Nor are you the standard by which I put you in your rightful place, disapproving of all that is base in you, and approving of all that is beautiful. The standard according to which I approve and disapprove is still more beautiful, so I approve more highly of it and prefer it not only to you but to all those bodily shapes from which you spring. Now think of the rule in this way. Everyone who knows that he has doubts knows with certainty something that is true, namely, that he doubts. He is certain, therefore, about a truth. Therefore everyone who doubts whether there be such a thing as *the* truth has at least a

truth to set a limit to his doubt; and nothing can be true except truth be in it. Accordingly, no one ought to have doubts about the existence of *the* truth, even if doubts arise for him from every possible quarter. Wherever this is seen, there is light that transcends space and time and all phantasms that spring from spatial and temporal things. Could this be in the least destroyed even if every reasoner should perish or grow old among inferior carnal things? Reasoning does not create truth but discovers it. Before it is discovered it abides in itself; and when it is discovered it renews us.

xl, 74. So the inward man is reborn, and the outward man decays day by day. The inward man regards the outward man and sees that he is base by comparison. Nevertheless, in his own kind he is beautiful and rejoices in what is convenient for the body, destroying what he converts to his own good, e.g., the nourishment he takes for the sake of his body. That which is destroyed, i.e., loses its form, passes into the workshop of his members, nourishes what needs nourishment and is transformed as is suitable. Somehow the processes of life make a selection. Some things which are suitable are assumed into the structure of the visible body and make it beautiful. Those which are not suitable are cast out by appropriate means. The most filthy part is returned to the earth to assume other forms. Something is exhaled by the whole body. Another part receives the latent numerical qualities of the living person, and is fitted to result in offspring. Prompted by the agreement of two bodies or by some like phantasm, it flows from the genital organs in basest pleasure, though not without the co-operation of the head. Within the mother over a fixed period of time it takes shape, and the members assume their proper place and function, and if they preserve their proper measure and symmetry and colour is added, a body is born which is called comely and is keenly loved by those who take delight in it. But what gives pleasure is not so much the mobile form as the life which causes the mobility. For if the child loves us it strongly attracts us. If it hates us we are angry and cannot endure it, even though its form be such as we might enjoy. All this is the realm of pleasure and of beauty of the lowest grade. It is subject to corruption, otherwise it would be mistaken for the supreme beauty.

75. Divine providence is at hand to show that the beauty of the human form is not evil, because it exhibits manifest traces of the primal numbers, though divine wisdom is not numbered

among them; but also that it is beauty of the lowest grade, for mixed up with it are griefs and diseases, distortions of limbs, darkness of colour, and conflicts and dissensions of mind. By these things we are admonished that we must seek something unchangeable. These evils providence brings about by the agency of inferior beings who find their pleasure in doing this, and whom the divine Scriptures call avengers and ministers of wrath, though they themselves do not know the good that is being done by means of them. Like these are men who rejoice in the miseries of others, and make sport and mocking spectacles by subverting others or by leading them astray. In all these things the good are admonished and exercised, and they are victorious, triumphant and regal. But the bad are deceived and tortured. They are vanquished, condemned and made to be slaves, not of the one most high Lord of all, but of his lowest servants, the bad angels who feed upon the griefs and misery of the damned, and in return for their malevolence are tortured when they see the good set free.

76. All have their offices and limits laid down so as to ensure the beauty of the universe. That which we abhor in any part of it gives us the greatest pleasure when we consider the universe as a whole. When we are judging a building we ought not to consider one angle only. So when we are judging a good-looking man we should not take account only of his hair. And with one who is making a good speech we should not merely pay attention to the motion of his hands. When we are thinking of the moon's course we should not study its phases over a period of merely three days. The very reason why some things are inferior is that though the parts may be imperfect the whole is perfect, whether its beauty is seen stationary or in movement. It must all be considered if we wish to reach a right judgment. If our judgment concerning the whole or the part is true, it is also beautiful. It is superior to the whole world, and in so far as our judgment is true we cling to no part of the world. When we are wrong, and pay exclusive attention to the part, our judgment is in itself base. The colour black in a picture may very well be beautiful if you take the picture as a whole. So the entire contest of human life is fittingly conducted by the unchanging providence of God who allots different rôles to the vanquished and the victorious, the contestants, the spectators, and the tranquil who contemplate God alone. In all these cases there is no evil except sin and sin's penalty, that is, a voluntary abandonment of highest being, and toil among inferior beings which is

not voluntary; in other words, freedom from justice and slavery under sin.

xli, 77. The outward man is destroyed either by the progress of the inward man, or by his own failure. When he is destroyed by the progress of the inward man, the whole man is reformed and made better, and is restored to his integrity "at the last trump." No longer will he corrupt or be corrupted. By his own failure he is cast down among corruptible beauties which rank as penalties. Do not be surprised if I still call them beautiful things, for everything is beautiful that is in due order. As the apostle says: "All order is of God" (Rom. 13:2). We must admit that a weeping man is better than a happy worm. And yet I could speak at great length without any falsehood in praise of the worm. I could point out the brightness of its colouring, the slender rounded shape of its body, the fitness of its parts from front to rear, and their effort to preserve unity as far as is possible in so lowly a creature. There is nothing anywhere about it that does not correspond to something else that matches it. What am I to say about its soul animating its tiny body? Even a worm's soul causes it to move with precision, to seek things suitable for it, to avoid or overcome difficulties as far as possible. Having regard always to the sense of safety, its soul hints much more clearly than its body at the unity which creates all natures. I am speaking of any kind of living worm. Many have spoken fully and truly in praise of ashes and dung. What wonder is it then if I say that a man's soul, which, wherever it is and whatever its quality, is better than any body, is beautifully ordered, and that other beauties arise even from the penalties it undergoes? For when it is unhappy it is not where it is fitting that only the happy should be, but where it is fitting that the unhappy should be.

78. Henceforth, let no one deceive us. Whatever is rightly to be blamed is spurned in comparison with what is better. Every existing thing however lowly is justly praised when it is compared with nothingness. Nothing is good if it can be better. If we can be in good case having the truth itself, our state is bad if we have only a trace of truth, and much worse if the trace is extremely slight as when we adhere to fleshly pleasures. Let us conquer the blandishments and troubles of desire. If we are men let us subdue this woman, *Cupiditas*. With our guidance she will herself become better and be called no longer Cupidity but Temperance. When she leads and we follow she is called Lust and we Rashness and Folly. Let us follow

Christ our Head, that she whose head we are may follow us. This precept can be laid upon women too, not by marital but by fraternal right. In Christ there is neither male nor female. Women too have some virile quality whereby they can subdue feminine pleasures, and serve Christ and govern desire. This is exemplified by many godly widows and virgins, and in many too who are married but who by the dispensation of the Christian people preserve conjugal rights in the bond of fraternity. God bids us dominate desire, and exhorts us and gives us the power to be restored to our own possession. If therefore by negligence or impiety a man, i.e., mind and reason, is subdued by desire he will be a base and unhappy man. His destiny in this life and his ordained place hereafter will be where the most high Ruler and Lord will apportion him. The universal creation may not be stained by any filthiness.

xlii, 79. Let us therefore walk while we have the day, i.e., while we can use reason. Let us turn to God so that we may deserve to be illumined by his Word, the true light, and that darkness may not take possession of us. Day is the presence of the "light that lighteth every man coming into the world" (John 1:9). "Every man," says Scripture, meaning everyone who can use reason, and who, when he has fallen, can earnestly seek to rise. If fleshly pleasure is loved, let it be carefully considered and vestigial traces of number will be recognized in it. We must, then, seek the realm where number exists in complete tranquillity; for there existence is, above all, unity. And if number is found in living movement, as for example in growing seeds, it will be even more wonderful than when found in corporeal things. If in seeds number could change and swell as seeds themselves do, half a tree would grow from half a fig-seed. Whole and complete animals would not be produced except from complete animal seeds (as they are in the case of the litters of certain animals); and a single tiny seed would not have the power to multiply its own kind innumerable. Obviously, from a single seed, according to the nature of each, crops can propagate crops, woods woods, herds herds, and peoples peoples throughout the ages, so that there is not a single leaf or hair in all that rhythmic succession, the reason for which did not exist in the first single seed. Again, think of the rhythmic and pleasantly beautiful sounds transmitted by the air when the nightingale sings. And yet the soul of that bird could not produce them so freely when it pleased, unless it had them incorporeally impressed upon it by the life force. This can be ob-

served in other living creatures which lack reason but do not lack sense. There is none of them which does not in the sound of its voice or in some other movement or activity of its members show something rhythmical and in its own fashion orderly, not indeed by reason of any knowledge, but by reason of the deep ties of nature which are arranged by the unchangeable law of numbers.

xliii, 80. Let us return to ourselves and pass over the things we have in common with trees and beasts. The swallow builds its nest in one way, and every kind of bird has its own way of building its nest. What is it in us that enables us to judge all these, the plan they are following and how far they accomplish it; to judge ourselves, too, in our buildings and other activities of the body, as if we were lords of all such things? What gives us these innumerable thoughts? What is it within us that knows that these corporeal things are relatively great or small, that every body can be halved, whatever size it may have, and even then may be subdivided into innumerable parts? If a grain of millet bears the same relation to one of its parts as our body bears to the world, it is as great in respect of that part as the world is in respect of us. And the world is full of designs and is beautiful not because of its size but because of the reason that is in it. It seems great not because of its quantity but by comparison with our smallness and the smallness of the living things it contains. These again can be infinitely divided, and are small not in themselves but by comparison with other things and above all with the universe itself. Nor is it different with respect to lengths of time. As in the case of space, every length of time can be halved. However brief it may be it has a beginning, a duration and an end. So it must have a middle point, being divided at the point where it draws nearer to the end. The short syllable is short by comparison with a long syllable, and the hour is short in winter when compared with a summer hour. So the space of a single hour is short by comparison with a day. So a day is short by comparison with a month, a month with a year, a year with a lustrum, a lustrum with the larger circles of time and they with universal time. The whole rhythmic succession and gradation in space and time is judged to be beautiful not by its size or length but by its ordered fitness.

81. The mode of order lives in perpetual truth. It has no bulk or temporal process. By its potency it is greater than all space, and by its eternity it remains changeless above the flux of time. And yet without it, vast bulk can have no unity, and length of



time cannot be kept in the straight path. There could be neither matter nor motion. It is the principle of unity, having neither size nor change whether finite or infinite. It has not one quality here and another there, or one now and another afterwards; for it is supremely the unique Father of Truth and Father of Wisdom, which is like the Father in all respects. Hence it is called his similitude and image because it comes from him. It is rightly called also the Son, and from him other things proceed. But before him is the universal form perfectly identical with the unity from which it springs, so that all other things, so far as they have being and resemble unity, are made according to that form.

xliv, 82. Some things are made conformable to that first form such as rational and intellectual creatures, among whom man is rightly said to be made in the image and likeness of God. Not otherwise could he behold unchangeable truth with his mind. But other things are made through the first form but are not in its image. If the rational creature serve its creator by whom, through whom, and to whom it was made, all other things will serve it. Life, which is next in the scale below soul, will lend aid in commanding the body. And the soul will even rule over the body, that last and lowest being, for the body will yield to its will in all things and will give no trouble; because the soul will not seek its happiness from the body or by it, but will receive happiness by itself from God. So the body too will be reformed and sanctified, and the soul will rule it without loss or corruption and without any burden of difficulty. "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but will be like the angels in heaven" (Matt. 22:30). "Meats for the belly and the belly for meats, but God will destroy both it and them" (I Cor. 6:13). "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy" (Rom. 14:17).

xlv, 83. Wherefore even in bodily pleasure we find something to teach us to despise it, not because the body is evil by nature, but because it is shameful for a being who can cleave to higher things and enjoy them to be the sport of love of the lowest good. When a charioteer loses control and pays the penalty for his rashness he accuses his equipment. But let him implore aid; let him take command of the situation; let him control his steeds which are making a spectacle of his downfall and bid fair to bring about his death if no help supervenes. Let him get back into his place in the chariot, and take control of the reins, and tame his horses and rule them more cautiously.

Then he will realize how well the chariot had been made with all its equipment, which by his ruinous handling brought danger upon himself and left the course of becoming moderation. So in paradise the greediness of the soul which badly used its body produced weakness. For it snatched at forbidden food against the prescription of the physician, in following which salvation is to be found.

84. If in the very weakness of visible flesh, where no happy life can be, some pointer towards happiness can be found, because the form of it reaches from the top to the bottom of the scale of existence, much more can a pointer be found in the search for rank and excellence, even in the pride and vain pomp of this world. For what else does a man seek in this case but to be if possible the sole lord of all things, perversely imitating Almighty God? If he submissively imitated him by living according to his commandments, God would put all other things under him, and he would not reach such deformity as to fear a little animal even while he wants to rule over men. Pride in a manner seeks unity and omnipotence, but in the realm of temporal things, where all things are transient like a shadow.

85. We want to be unconquered and rightly so, for the nature of our mind is unconquerable though only as we are subject to God in whose image we are made. But his commandments had to be observed, and if they were obeyed no one would overcome us. But now while the woman to whose words we basely consented is subject to the pains of childbirth, we labour on the ground and are disgracefully overcome by anything that can trouble or disturb us. We do not want to be overcome by men, but we cannot overcome anger. What more execrable baseness can there be? We admit that we are men, and even a vicious man is better than vice. How much more honourable it would be to be conquered by a man than by a vice? Who would doubt that envy is a monstrous vice which must necessarily torture and subdue anyone who is unwilling to be conquered in temporal things. It is better that a man should overcome us than that we should be overcome by envy or any other vice.

xlvi, 86. He who has overcome his vices cannot be overcome by man either. Only he is overcome who has what he loves snatched from him by his adversary. He who loves only what cannot be snatched from him is indubitably unconquerable, and is tortured by no envy. He loves what many have come to know and to love, thereby deserving to be congratulated. For he loves God with all his heart and with all his soul and with

all his mind, and his neighbour as himself. God does not grudge his becoming as he is himself. Rather he even helps him as much as possible. He cannot lose his neighbour whom he loves as himself, for he does not love even in himself the things that appear to the eyes or to any other bodily sense. So he has inward fellowship with him whom he loves as himself.

87. The rule of love is that one should wish his friend to have all the good things he wants to have himself, and should not wish the evils to befall his friend which he wishes to avoid himself. He shows this benevolence towards all men. No evil must be done to any. Love of one's neighbour worketh no evil (Rom. 13:10). Let us then love even our enemies as we are commanded, if we wish to be truly unconquered. For no man is unconquerable in himself, but by the unchangeable law which makes free those who serve it and them only. What they love cannot be taken from them, and by that fact alone they are rendered unconquerable and perfect men. If a man were to love another not as himself but as a beast of burden, or as the baths, or as a gaudy or garrulous bird, that is for some temporal pleasure or advantage he hoped to derive, he must serve not a man but, what is much worse, a foul and detestable vice, in that he does not love the man as a man ought to be loved. When that vice is dominant it leads to the lowest form of life or rather to death.

88. Man is not to be loved by man even as brothers after the flesh are loved, or sons, or wives, or kinsfolk, or relatives, or fellow citizens. For such love is temporal. We should have no such connections as are contingent upon birth and death, if our nature had remained in obedience to the commandments of God and in the likeness of his image. It would not have been relegated to its present corrupt state. Accordingly, the Truth himself calls us back to our original and perfect state, bids us resist carnal custom, and teaches that no one is fit for the kingdom of God unless he hates these carnal relationships. Let no one think that is inhuman. It is more inhuman to love a man because he is your son and not because he is a man, that is, not to love that in him which belongs to God, but to love that which belongs to yourself. What marvel if he who loves his private advantage and not the commonweal does not obtain a kingdom? Someone will say he should love both, but God says he must love one. Most truly says the Truth: "No man can serve two masters" (Matt. 6:24). No one can perfectly love that to which we are called unless he hate that *from* which we are called.

We are called to perfect human nature as God made it before we sinned. We are recalled from love of what we have deserved by sinning. Therefore we must hate that from which we choose to be set free.

89. If we are ablaze with love for eternity we shall hate temporal relationships. Let a man love his neighbour as himself. No one is his own father or son or kinsman or anything of the kind, but is simply a man. Whoever loves another as himself ought to love that in him which is his real self. Our real selves are not bodies. So we are not to desire and set great store by a man's body. Here, too, the precept is valid: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's property. Whoever, then, loves in his neighbour anything but his real self does not love him as himself. Human nature is to be loved whether it be perfect or in process of becoming perfect, but without any condition of carnal relationship. All are related who have one God for their Father and who love him and do his will. And all are fathers and sons to one another, fathers when they take thought for others, sons when they obey, but above all they are brothers because one Father by his Testament calls them to one inheritance.

xlvi, 90. Why should not he be unconquered who in loving man loves nothing but the man, the creature of God, made according to his image? And how can he fail to discover the perfect nature he loves, since God is perfect? For example, if anyone loves a good singer, not this or that particular one but any good singer, being himself a perfect singer, he wants all to be such, while at the same time preserving his own power to do what he loves, for he too sings well. But if he is envious of any good singer, he does not love good singing for itself but for the praise or some other advantage he wishes to obtain by singing well. But that advantage can be diminished or indeed taken away if another sings well. He who is envious of a good singer does not love him for his singing; and on the other hand, he who lacks talent does not sing well. This could be much more fitly said of one who lives rightly, because he can envy no one. For the reward of right living is the same for all, and it is not made less when many obtain it. A time may come when a good singer cannot sing properly, and requires another's voice to show what he loves. He might be at a banquet where it was wrong for him to sing, but where he might properly hear another sing. But it is never improper to live aright. Whoever does this and loves it, not only does not envy those who imitate him, but also treats them with the greatest possible kindness and good will. But he

does not stand in any need of them. What he loves in them he himself completely and perfectly possesses. So when a man loves his neighbour as himself, he is not envious of him any more than he is envious of himself. He gives him such help as he can as if he were helping himself. But he does not need him any more than he needs himself. He needs God alone, by cleaving to whom he is happy. No one can take God from him. He, then, is most truly and certainly an unconquered man who cleaves to God, not indeed that he may merit any extra good thing from him, but because for him to cleave to God is itself good.

91. Such a man, so long as he is in this life, uses his friend to repay favours received, his enemy to cultivate patience, anyone at all in order to exercise beneficence, and all men as objects of benevolence. Though he does not love temporal things, he uses them rightly himself, and takes thought for men according to the lot of each, if he cannot treat them all alike. So if he is more ready to speak to one of his friends than to anyone else, it is not because he loves him more, but because he has greater confidence in addressing him, and opportunity opens the door. He treats those who are devoted to temporal concerns all the better because he is himself less bound to temporal things. If he cannot help all whom he loves equally without preferring to benefit those who are more closely related to him, he is unjust. Relationship of mind is a greater thing than relationships due to the place or time where or when we were born in the flesh. But the relationship which binds all together is the most important of all. He is not made sorrowful by the death of anyone, for he who loves God with all his mind knows that nothing can perish for him unless it perish also in the sight of God. But God is Lord of the living and the dead. He is not made unhappy by the unhappiness of another, any more than he is made just by the justice of another. As no one can take from him God and justice, so no one can take from him his happiness. If at any time he is touched with feeling for another's danger or error or grief, he lets it go so far as to help or correct or console that other, but not to subvert himself.

92. In all laborious duties he cherishes the certain expectation of rest to come, and so is not crushed. What can harm him who can make a good use even of an enemy? He does not fear enmities because he is guarded and protected by God who has given both the command and the ability to love enemies. In tribulations he feels it is a small thing not to be saddened. Rather he even rejoices, knowing that "tribulation worketh patience,

and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:3-5). Who can hurt such a man? Who can subdue him? In prosperity he makes moral progress, and in adversity learns to know the progress he has made. When he has abundance of mutable goods he does not put his trust in them; and when they are withdrawn he gets to know whether or not they had taken him captive. Usually when we have them we imagine that we do not love them, but when they begin to leave us we discover what manner of men we are. We have a thing without loving it when we can let it go without grieving. He who by excelling obtains what he will grieve to lose, seems to be victorious but is in reality vanquished; and he who by giving way obtains what he cannot unwillingly lose is really victorious though he seem to be vanquished.

xlvi, 93. He who delights in liberty seeks to be free from the love of mutable things. He who delights to rule should submissively cleave to God, the sole ruler of all things, loving God more than himself. This is perfect justice, to love the better things more and the lesser things less. He should love a wise and perfect soul because it has the quality of justice, and a foolish soul because it has the power to become wise and perfect. He ought not to love even himself if he is foolish; for he who loves himself when he is foolish will make no progress towards wisdom. No one will become what he desires to be unless he hates himself as he is. But until he reaches wisdom and perfection he bears with the folly of his neighbour as he would bear with his own, supposing he were foolish and at the same time a lover of wisdom. Wherefore, if even pride itself is the shadow of true liberty and true royalty, by it also divine providence reminds us what we are worth when we are stained with vice, and to what we must return when we have been corrected.

xlvi, 94. All curiosity with regard to spectacles aims at nothing else than the joy of knowing things. What, then, is more wonderful and beautiful than truth? Every spectator admits that he wants to reach truth. Hence he takes great care not to be deceived, and vaunts himself if he shows more acuteness and vivacity than others in watching and learning and judging. Men carefully and closely watch a juggler who professes nothing but deceit. If his tricks elude discovery they are delighted with the cleverness of the man who hoodwinks them. If he did not know how to mislead those who were looking on, or was believed

not to know, no one would applaud. But any of the people who catches him out thinks himself worthy of greater praise than the juggler for no other reason than that he could not be deceived or taken in. If many see through the trick the juggler is not praised, but the rest who cannot see it are laughed at. So the palm is always awarded to knowledge, to the comprehension of truth. But no one can reach truth who looks for it outside the mind.

95. When we are asked which is better, truth or falsehood, we answer with one voice that truth is better. And yet we are so sunk in trifles and baseness that we are much more ready to cling to jests and games in which deception, not truth, delights us, than to the precepts of the truth itself. So by our own judgment and out of our own mouth we are sentenced because we approve one thing by reason and pursue another in our vanity. So long as a thing is a matter of fun and games, we know that it arouses laughter when it counterfeits truth. But when we love such things we fall away from truth, and cannot discover what they imitate, and so we pant for them as if they were the prime objects of beauty. Getting further away from these primal objects we embrace our phantasms. When we return to seek truth phantasms meet us in the way and will not allow us to pass on, attacking us like brigands, not indeed with violence but with dangerous pitfalls, because we do not know how widely applicable is the saying: "Keep yourselves from images" (I John 5:21).

96. So some go vaguely wandering in thought through innumerable worlds. Others have thought that God cannot exist except as corporeal fire. Others have thought of God as the brightness of an immense light radiating through infinite space in all directions, except that on one side it is cloven as by a black wedge. They are of opinion that there are two realms, one over against the other, and they set up two opposing principles as fabulous as their phantasms. If I were to urge them to declare on oath whether they know that these things are true, probably they would not dare to go so far; but they might reply: *You* show us what truth is. If I were to reply simply that they should look for the light that enables them to be certain that believing is one thing and knowing another, they themselves would swear that that light cannot be seen with the eyes, nor thought of as filling any space however vast, and yet that it is everywhere present to those who seek; and that nothing can be found more certain or more serene.

97. All that I have said about the light of the mind is made

clear by that same light. By it I know that what I have said is true, and that I know that I know it. I know that that light has extension neither in space nor in time. I know that I cannot know unless I am alive, and I know more certainly that by knowing I attain a richer life. Eternal life surpasses temporal life in vivacity, and only by knowing do I get a glimpse of what eternity is. By looking at eternity with the mind's eye I remove from it all changeableness, and in eternity I see no temporal duration, for periods of time are constituted by the movements, past or future, of things. In eternity there is neither past nor future. What is past has ceased to be, and what is future has not yet begun to be. Eternity is ever the same. It never "was" in the sense that it is not now, and it never "will be" in the sense that it is not yet. Wherefore, eternity alone could have said to the human mind "I am what I am." And of eternity alone could it be truly said: "He who is hath sent me" (Ex. 3:14).

1, 98. If we cannot yet cleave to eternity, at least let us drive away our phantasms, and cast out of our mental vision trifling and deceptive games. Let us use the steps which divine providence has deigned to make for us. When we delighted over much in silly figments, and grew vain in our thoughts, and turned our whole life into vain dreams, the ineffable mercy of God did not disdain to use rational angelic creatures to teach us by means of sounds and letters, by fire and smoke and cloudy pillar, as by visible words. So with parables and similitudes in a fashion he played with us when we were children, and sought to heal our inward eyes by smearing them with clay.

99. Let us then make clear to ourselves what faith we ought to repose in history and what in intelligence; what we ought to commit to memory, not knowing that it is true but believing all the same; where is the truth that neither comes nor passes away but abides ever the same; what is the mode of interpreting allegory, believed to have been spoken in wisdom through the Holy Spirit; whether it is enough to allegorize things that have been seen in ancient days and in more recent times, or is it to be applied to the affections and nature of the soul, and to unchangeable eternity. Do some stories signify visible deeds, others movements of minds, and others the law of eternity; or are some found in which all these are to be discovered? What is stable faith, historical and temporal or spiritual and eternal, according to which all interpretation of authoritative writings is to be directed? What advantage is to be derived from believing temporal things for knowing and possessing eternal things,



which is the end of all good actions? What is the difference between allegorizing history and allegorizing facts or speeches or sacraments? How is the diction of the divine Scriptures to be received according to the idiom of various languages? Every language has its own special modes of expression which seem absurd when translated into another language. What is the advantage of such a lowly form of speech? For in the sacred books we find mention made of the anger of God, his sadness, his awaking from sleep, his remembering and forgetting, and other things which can happen to good men. Not only so, there is also mention of his repentance, his zeal, his feasting and other such things. Are God's eyes and hands and feet, and other members named in Scripture, to be held to refer to something like the visible form of the human body? Or do they signify intelligible and spiritual powers, as do such words in Scripture as helmet, shield, sword, girdle and the like? Above all we must ask how it profits the human race that the divine providence has spoken to us by human rational and corporeal creatures who have been the servants of God. When we have come to know that one truth, all puerile impudence is driven from our minds and holy religion comes into its own.

li, 100. Putting aside, therefore, all theatrical and poetic trifling, let us by the diligent study of the divine Scriptures, find food and drink for our minds; for they are weary and parched with the hunger and thirst of vain curiosity, and desire in vain to be refreshed and satisfied with silly phantasms, as unreal as painted banquets. Let us be wholesomely educated by this truly liberal and noble game. If wonderful and beautiful spectacles afford us delight, let us desire to see wisdom "which teaches from one end to the other with might, and pleasantly disposes of all things." What is more wonderful than incorporeal might making and ruling the corporeal world? What more beautiful than its ordering and adorning the material world?

lii, 101. All admit that these things are perceived by the body, and that the mind is better than the body. Will not the mind by itself have some object that it can perceive which must be far more excellent and far nobler? We are put in mind by the things of which we are judges to look to that standard by which we judge. We turn from artistic works to the law of the arts, and we shall behold with the mind the form by comparison with which all the things are tarnished which its very goodness has made beautiful. "For the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the

things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20). This is the return from temporal to eternal things, and the transformation of the old man into the new. What can fail to urge man to strive for virtue, when his very vices urge him? Curiosity seeks nothing but knowledge, which cannot be certain knowledge unless it be knowledge of eternal things which remain ever the same. Pride seeks nothing but power, which has reference to facility in acting. But power is attained only by the perfect soul which is submissive to God and which with great love turns towards his kingdom. Bodily pleasure seeks nothing but rest, and there is no rest save where there is no poverty and no corruption. We must beware of the creatures of the lower regions, i.e., of severer penalties after this life, where there can be no reminder of truth because there is no reasoning. And there is no reasoning because there is no shining of "the light that lighteth every man coming into this world" (John 1:9). Wherefore, let us hasten and walk while it is day lest darkness come upon us. Let us hasten to be set free from the second death, where no one is who is mindful of God, and where no one will make confession to God.

liii, 102. But unhappy men make light of what they have come to know, and rejoice in novelties. They take greater pleasure in learning than in knowing, though knowledge is the end of learning. They hold facility in acting to be a poor thing and prefer the battle to the victory, though victory is the end of battle. Those who care little for bodily health prefer to eat too much rather than to eat just enough for satiety. They prefer to enjoy sexual acts rather than to suffer no such agitation. Some even prefer to sleep rather than not to be drowsy. And yet the end of all these desires is *not* to be hungry or thirsty, *not* to seek intercourse with a woman, *not* to be weary.

103. Those who desire these true ends first put off curiosity; for they know that certain knowledge which is within, and they enjoy it as far as they can in this life. Then they put off obstinacy and receive facility in acting, knowing that it is a greater and easier victory not to resist the animosity of any one. And they remain of this opinion so far as they can in this life. Lastly, they seek bodily tranquillity by abstaining from things that are not necessary for living this life. So they taste how sweet is the Lord. They have no doubt as to what will be after this life, and their perfection is nourished by faith, hope and charity. After this life, knowledge will be made perfect. For now we know in part, but when that which is perfect is come, knowledge will not



be in part. There will be perfect peace, for there will be no other law in my members fighting against the law of my mind, but the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord will set us free from the body of this death. To a great extent we agree with the adversary while we are with him in the way. The body will be entirely whole without lack or weariness; for this corruptible will put on incorruption in its due time and order, when the resurrection of the flesh comes. There is no marvel if this is given to those who, in knowing, love truth alone, and, in action, love peace alone, and, in the body, love wholeness and nothing besides. What they most love in this life will be made perfect for them after this life.

liv, 104. To those who make a bad use of so good a thing as the mind, desiring visible things outside the mind which ought to remind them to behold and love intelligible things, to them will be given outer darkness. The beginning of this darkness is fleshly knowledge and the weakness of the bodily senses. Those who delight in strife will be aliens from peace and involved in frightful difficulties. The beginning of the greatest difficulty is war and contention. And this I suppose is signified by the fact that their hands and feet are bound, i.e., all facility of working is taken from them. Those who want to hunger and thirst, to burn with lust and be weary, so that they may have pleasure in eating and drinking, in lying with a woman, and in sleeping, love indigence which is the beginning of the greatest woes. What they love will be made perfect for them, for they will be where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

105. There are many who love all these vices together. Their whole life is a round of seeing spectacles, striving, eating, drinking, sleeping, having sexual intercourse. They have nothing in their thoughts but to embrace the phantasms which arise out of a life like that, and from their deceptions to set up rules of superstition or impiety to deceive themselves. To these they adhere even when they try to abstain from the enticements of the flesh. They do not make a good use of the talent committed to them, i.e., keenness of mind in which all seem to excel who are called learned, polished or elegant, but keep it bound up in a napkin or buried in the earth, i.e., wrapt up in voluptuous and superfluous things, and crushed beneath earthly cupidities. Therefore their hands and feet will be bound, and they will be sent into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Not because they loved these woes—for who could love them?—but because the things they loved were the beginnings

of these woes, and necessarily bring those who love them to this evil plight. Those, who love the journey rather than the return home or the journey's end, are to be sent into distant parts. They are flesh and spirit continually on the move and never reaching home.

106. But he who makes a good use even of his five bodily senses, to believe and praise the works of God, to cultivate love of God, to seek tranquillity of thought and action, and to know God, *he* enters into the joy of his Lord. The talent is taken from him who made a bad use of it, and is given to him who made a good use of his five talents. Not indeed that keenness of intellect can be transferred from one to another. What is meant is that clever people who neglect their minds and are impious can lose their gift, and that diligent and pious people who are of a slower understanding can nevertheless reach understanding. The talent was not given to him who had received two talents, for he who lives aright both in thought and action already has all he needs. It was given to him who had received five. For he has not yet sufficient mental strength to contemplate eternal things who puts his trust in visible and temporal things. But he can acquire it who praises God, the maker of all sensible things; who trusts God by faith, waits on God in hope, and seeks him in love.

lv, 107. This being so, my dearly beloved friends and brethren, I exhort you as I exhort myself to run with all possible speed after that to which God calls us by his wisdom. Let us not love the world since all that is in the world is lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of the world. Do not let us love to corrupt or be corrupted by fleshly pleasure, lest we come to a yet more miserable corruption of grief and torment. Do not let us love strife, lest we be given over to the power of the angels who rejoice in strife, to be humbled, bound and beaten. Let us not love spectacles, lest we wander from the truth and love shadows and are cast into darkness.

108. Let not our religion consist in phantasms of our own imagining. Any kind of truth is better than any fiction we may choose to produce. And yet we must not worship the soul, though the soul remains true even when we entertain false imaginations about it. Stubble, which is nevertheless real, is better than light fabricated at will by the vain thought of him who imagines it; and yet it would be madness to hold stubble, which we can perceive and touch, to be worthy of our worship. Let not our religion be the worship of human works. The workmen are better than their works, yet we must not worship them.

Let not our religion be the worship of beasts. The worst men are better than beasts, but we must not worship them. Let not our religion be the worship of dead men. If they lived pious lives, it must not be supposed that they seek divine honours. They want us to worship him, in whose light they rejoice to have us as sharers in their merit. They are to be honoured by imitation and not adored with religious rites. If they lived evil lives, wherever they now are, they are not to be worshipped. Let not our religion be the worship of demons, for all superstition is the punishment and the deadly disgrace of men, but it is the glory and triumph of demons.

109. Let not our religion be the worship of lands and waters. Air is purer and clearer than these, though it can also be foggy; we must not worship air. Let not our religion be the worship of the purer and more serene upper air, for it is dark when there is no light. Purer than air is the brightness of fire, which, however, we ought not to worship, since we can kindle and extinguish it at will. Let not our religion be the worship of ethereal and celestial bodies, for although they are rightly preferred to all other bodies, still any kind of life is better than they. If they are animated by a soul, any soul in itself is better than any animated body, and yet no one has ever thought that a vicious soul was to be worshipped. Let not our religion be the worship of the life that trees live, for it is not sentient life. It is of the kind that goes on in the rhythm of our bodies, the sort of life that our bones and hair have, and our hair can be cut without our feeling anything. Sentient life is better than this, and yet we must not worship such life as beasts have.

110. Let not our religion be the worship of the perfectly wise rational soul, as it is found in angels who steadfastly carry on their ministry in the universe or in its parts, or in the best of men who await the reformation of their lower selves. All rational life obeys the voice of unchangeable truth speaking silently within the soul. If it does not so obey it is vicious. Rational life therefore does not owe its excellence to itself, but to the truth which it willingly obeys. The lowest man must worship the same God as is worshipped by the highest angel. In fact it is by refusing to worship him that human nature has been brought low. The source of wisdom and of truth is the same for angel and man, namely the one unchangeable Wisdom and Truth. The very Virtue and changeless Wisdom of God, consubstantial and co-eternal with the Father, for our salvation deigned, in the temporal dispensation, to take upon himself our nature in order to

teach us that man must worship what every rational intellectual creature must also worship. Let us believe that the highest angels and most excellent ministers of God want us to join them in the worship of the one God, in contemplation of whom they find their happiness. Even we are not made happy by seeing an angel but by seeing the truth, by which we love the angels too and rejoice with them. We do not grudge that they should have readier access to the truth and enjoy it without obstacle. Rather we love them because we are bidden by our common Lord to hope for the same condition hereafter. So we honour them with love, but not with divine worship. We do not build temples for them. They do not wish to be honoured by us in that way, because they know that when we are good men we are ourselves the temples of the most high God. Accordingly it is written, with complete propriety that an angel once forbade a man to worship him, bidding him worship the one God under whom both angel and man were fellow-servants (Rev. 19:10).

111. Those who invite us to serve and worship themselves as gods are like proud men who, if they could, would like to be worshipped in that way. It is less perilous to endure such men than to worship demons. All lordship of men over men is brought to an end by the death of the lord or of the servant. Servitude under the pride of the evil angels is more to be feared on account of the time that is to follow death. Anyone can easily see that under a human lord we are allowed to have our thoughts free. We fear the lordship of demons because it is exercised over the mind in which is found our only means of beholding and grasping the truth. Wherefore, though we be enchained and subjected to all the powers given to men to rule the state, provided we "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21), there is no need to fear lest anyone should exact such service after we are dead. The servitude of the soul is one thing, the servitude of the body quite another. Just men who have all their joy in God alone congratulate those who praise *him* for their good deeds. But when they are praised themselves, where possible they correct the erring. Where that is not possible, they are so far from being grateful for the error that they are eager to have it corrected. The good angels and all the holy ministers of God are like these, only more holy and pure. We need not fear lest we offend any of them if we avoid superstition, and with their help tend towards God alone, and bind [*religare*] our souls

to him alone without superstition. Hence, it is believed, religion derives its name.

112. One God alone I worship, the sole principle of all things, and his Wisdom who makes every wise soul wise, and his Gift [*munus*] whereby all the blessed are blessed. I am certainly sure that every angel that loves this God loves me too. Whoever abides in him and can hear human prayers, hears me in him. Whoever has God as his chief good, helps me in him, and cannot grudge my sharing in him. Let those who adore or flatter the parts of the world tell me this. What good friend will the man lack who worships the one God whom all the good love, in knowing whom they rejoice, and by having recourse to whom as their first principle they derive their goodness? Every angel that loves his own aberrations and will not be subject to the truth, but desires to find joy in his own advantage, has fallen away from the common good of all and from true beatitude. To such all evil men are given to be subdued and oppressed. But no good man is given over into his power except to be tried and proved. None can doubt that such an angel is not to be worshipped, for our misery is his joy, and our return to God is his loss.

113. Let our religion bind us to the one omnipotent God, because no creature comes between our minds and him whom we know to be the Father and the Truth, i.e., the inward light whereby we know him. In him and with him we venerate the Truth, who is in all respects like him, and who is the form of all things that have been made by the One, and that endeavour after unity. To spiritual minds it is clear that all things were made by this form which alone achieves what all things seek after. But all things would not have been made by the Father through the Son, nor would they be preserved within their bounds in safety, unless God were supremely good. He grudges nothing to any, for he has given to all the possibility to be good, and has given to all the power to abide in the good as far as they would or could. Wherefore it befits us to keep and to worship the Gift [*donum*] of God, equally unchangeable with the Father and the Son, in a Trinity of one substance. We worship one God from whom, through whom and in whom we have our being, from whom we fell away, being made unlike him, by whom we have not been allowed to perish, the principle to which we have recourse, the form we imitate, the grace whereby we are reconciled. We worship one God by whom we were made, and his likeness by whom we are formed for unity, and his peace whereby

we cleave to unity; God who spoke and it was done; and the Word by whom all was made that has substance and nature; and the Gift of his benignity by whom nothing that he made through the Word should perish, but should please and be reconciled to its Creator; one God by whose creative work we live, by whom we are remade so that we may live in wisdom, and by loving and enjoying whom we live in blessedness; one God from whom, through whom, and in whom are all things. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.